

Message Text

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17

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SY-05 SS-15 INR-07 NSC-05 CIAE-00 MED-02

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5256

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE NEW DELHI 5403

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, IN

SUBJECT: OM MEHTA'S US VISIT

REF: STATE 87211

1. WE NOTE THAT THE APRIL 7 "BALTIMORE SUN" ARTICLE WRITTEN BY NEW DELHI-BASED "SUN" CORRESPONDENT, PRAN SABARWAL, REPORTS THAT OM MEHTA'S TEN-DAY U.S. VISIT IS PART OF A GOI "LOW-PROFILE, PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE" DIPLOMACY "IN PURSUIT OF THE AIMS OF THE INDIA-US JOINT COMMISSION." ACCORDING TO THE ARTICLE, WHICH ALSO REPORTS THE PARALLEL VISIT OF DEPUTY INFORMATION MINISTER SINHA, AND WE BELIEVE IS BASED ON A BRIEFING FROM OFFICIAL SOURCES, MEHTA WILL EXPLAIN THE CURRENT DOMESTIC SITUATION IN INDIA.

2. COMMENT: INFORMATION DEPUTY MINISTER SINHA AND OM MEHTA'S VISITS MAY BE INDICATIVE OF A GOI ATTEMPT TO COMBAT THE U.S. LOBBYING ACTIVITIES OF INDIANS FOR DEMOCRACY, SUBRAMANIAM SWAMY AND (INDIRECTLY) GEORGE FERNANDES. A CONGRESS (R) MP WHO RECENTLY VISITED THE U.S. TOLD US THAT HE HAD DESCRIBED TO MRS. GANDHI THE SOMEWHAT HOSTILE RECEPTION HE AND THE INDIAN CONSUL GENERAL IN NEW YORK RECEIVED IN FRONT OF AN AUDIENCE OF INDIANS IN NEW YORK. HE NOTED THAT THE PRIME MINISTER SAID HER OWN SOURCES AGREED WITH HIS CONCLUSION

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THAT THE MAIN CRITICS OF INDIA IN THE U.S. ARE INDIANS.

3. WE WOULD APPRECIATE ANY FEEDBACK ON MEHTA'S AND SINHA'S
PUBLIC APPEARANCES IN THE U.S.
SAXBE

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